(c) the steps taken in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) to (c) Air India and Indian Airlines have introduced 11 new flights on Gulf sectors during the year 1996-97. Further augmentation of flights would depend upon the market requirements, which are constantly monitored by the airlines through traffic surveys.

Indian Airlines pilots agitation

278. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently the Indian Airlines pilots indulged in an agitation only for a couple of demands;

(b) whether their demands have been met; if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any pilot has been penalised for resorting to the agitation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Indian Commercial Pilots Association had signed a settlement on 26.1.96 which is valid till 31.12.98. The Association raised certain issues which are aleady covered in the settlement dated 26.1.96 and cannot be re-opened during the currency of the settlement.

(c) and (d) Disciplinary action under the Standing Orders has been initiated against seven pilots who had refused to operate flights.

New Policy to define the role of non-resident

279. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) have Government worked out a new policy defining the role of non-resident and foreign investment in the Civil Aviation Sector; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) and (b) The modalities for permitting foreign equity and NRI equity participation in domestic air transport services sector are under formulation.

Growth of pasenger Traffic

280. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Miniter of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the growth of passenger traffic has not grown by 10-12% as predicted; and

(b) if so, what steps Government proposed to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORAMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) and (b) The domestic passengers carried during the year 1995 and 1996 were 119.75 and 119.07 lakhs respectively. Additional capacity is now being sanctioned to other arilines/new operators to ensure that the passenger traffic growth is not restricted due to shortage of available capacity.

Representations by small companies against the levy of high charges by NAA

281. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many representations have been received from companies using smaller commercial aircraft to reduce high charges being levied by National Airport Authority;

(b) if so, the details of such representations;

(d) whether Government have initiated any dialogue with the small companies to find a proper and administratively suitable price for services of NAA; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?